

Claims

1. A method of providing data from a plurality of remote data servers for concurrent display by a browser, the method comprising the steps of:
 - 5 receiving a symbol representing a data selection;
 - mapping said symbol to respective symbols used by each of the data servers to represent said data selection;
 - sending the mapped symbols to their respective data servers;
 - receiving data corresponding to the mapped symbols from each of the data servers; and
 - 10 displaying the received data concurrently within a browser window.
2. A method according to claim 1, wherein the browser window is divided into a plurality of frames, each frame displaying data from one of the data servers, the method comprising automatically changing the data in one or more of the frames in response to a symbol entered by a user in one of the other of the plurality of frames.
- 15 3. A method according to claim 2, further comprising linking the frames in which data is to be automatically changed, the linked frames defining selected ones of the data servers to which mapped symbols are to be sent.
- 20 4. A method according to claim 3, wherein the linked frames are defined by the user.
- 25 5. A method according to claim 3 or 4, further comprising the step of retrieving mapping information for use in mapping the received symbol to symbols to be sent to each of the selected data servers.
- 30 6. A method according to claim 5, wherein the mapping information comprises a mapping algorithm.

7. A method according to any one of claims 3 to 6, further comprising the step of retrieving a resource identifier which identifies each of the selected data servers.

8. A method according to claim 7, wherein the resource identifier comprises a uniform resource locator address (url).

9. A method according to claim 7 or 8, further comprising, for each of the selected data servers, synthesising a link to the corresponding data, the link comprising a synthesis of the resource identifier and the mapped symbol for the selected data server.

10. A method according to claim 9, comprising using the link to send the mapped symbols to each of the selected data servers.

11. A method of retrieving data from a remote data server for display at a browser, the method comprising:
receiving a first symbol representing a first data selection;
transforming said first symbol to a second symbol;
synthesising said second symbol with a resource identifier identifying the location of the data server to provide a link to the data server;
initiating a connection to the data server via the synthesised link;
receiving a response from the data server; and
determining whether the response provides a second data selection corresponding to the first data selection.

12. A method according to claim 11, comprising transforming the first symbol to the second symbol by selecting the second symbol from one of a plurality of predefined symbols.

13. A method according to claim 11, comprising transforming the first symbol to the second symbol in a predetermined manner.

14. A method according to any one of claims 11 to 13, further comprising adding the data server to a list of available information service providers in the event that the second data selection corresponds to the first data selection.
- 5 15. A method according to any one of claims 11 to 13, comprising, in the event that the response does not provide a second data selection which corresponds to the first data selection, informing the user.
- 10 16. A method according to any one of claims 11 to 13, comprising, in the event that the response does not provide a second data selection which corresponds to the first data selection, using a different transformation to transform the first symbol to the second symbol and repeating the steps of synthesising a link to the data server, connecting to the data server, receiving a response from the data server and determining whether the response provides a selection which corresponds to
15 the first data selection.
17. A method according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the data is real-time streamed data.
- 20 18. A program for enabling data from a plurality of remote data servers to be concurrently displayed by a browser, the program being operative, when downloaded to the browser, to perform the method of any one of the preceding claims.
- 25 19. A program according to claim 18, wherein the program includes mapping information for use in the step of mapping the received symbol.
20. A program according to claim 18, further comprising means for retrieving mapping information from a client computer on which the program is running for
30 use in the step of mapping the received symbol.

21. A program according to claim 18, further comprising means for retrieving mapping information from a remote server for use in the step of mapping the received symbol.

5 22. A program according to any one of claims 18 to 21, wherein the mapping information comprises a mapping algorithm.

23. A program for providing data from a plurality of remote data servers for concurrent display by a browser, the program comprising:

10 means for receiving a symbol representing a data selection;
 means for mapping said symbol to respective symbols used by each of the data servers to represent said data selection;
 means for sending the mapped symbols to their respective data servers;
 means for receiving data corresponding to the mapped symbols from each of
15 the data servers; and
 means for displaying the received data concurrently within a browser
window.

24. A program for retrieving data from a remote data server for display at a browser, the program comprising:

20 means for receiving a first symbol representing a first data selection;
 means for transforming said first symbol to a second symbol;
 means for synthesising said second symbol with a resource identifier
identifying the location of the data server to provide a link to the data server;
25 means for initiating a connection to the data server via the synthesised link;
 means for receiving a response from the data server; and
 means for determining whether the response provides a second data
selection corresponding to the first data selection.